

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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TO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
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SECDEF PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 150486

EXDIS - MIL ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, UK, GT, BH

SUBJECT:"PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES" BY BRITISH
REF: BRIDGETOWN 1500

1. U.K. EMBASSY OFFICER MILLINGTON VISITED DEPARTMENT
JUNE 28 TO RELAY, "IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE" AND UNDER
INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN, FOLLOWING INFOR-
MATION ABOUT U.K. MILITARY MOVES IN ANTICIPATION OF JULY
NEGOTIATING ROUND.

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2. U.K. HAD CONCLUDED THAT GUATEMALA HAD SHOWN STEADY IM-
PROVEMENT IN ITS CAPABILITY TO ATTACK WITH NO WARNING.
IN LIGHT OF THIS ASSESSMENT, AND IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY
THAT PRESSURES COULD MOUNT ON LAUGERUD FOR MILITARY ACTION,
BRITISH HAD DECIDED TO STATION FRIGATE "ACHILLES" WITHIN
6 HOURS STEAMING TIME OF BELIZE. MILLINGTON SAID FRIGATE

WOULD REMAIN "WELL BELOW THE HORIZON," BUT WOULD BE ON STATION AS OF JULY 6.

3. IN ADDITION THE FLEET AUXILIARY "REGENT" WOULD BE LEAVING ENGLAND JUNE 29, AND WOULD ARRIVE IN THE AREA ON JULY 11. ALSO, TO "MAKE GOOD SOME SMALL ADDITIONAL DEFICIENCIES," MORE TROOPS (UNDER 50) ARE BEING SENT TO BELIZE. A DECISION ON WHETHER TO SEND FIGHTER PLANES, HOWEVER, HAS "BEEN PUT OFF FOR THE MOMENT."

4. MILLINGTON SAID THAT OWEN'S VIEW WAS THAT THERE "MIGHT HAVE BEEN A CASE FOR A LARGER REINFORCEMENT ON STRICTLY MILITARY GROUNDS," BUT THAT THIS LIMITED REACTION WAS BEING TAKEN IN ORDER TO KEEP DOWN THE LEVEL OF TENSION.

5. THE BRITISH HAVE DECIDED THAT BECAUSE THEIR ACTION IS A "PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE" AND NOT A MAJOR REINFORCEMENT, THE GUATEMALANS WOULD NOT BE INFORMED. HE ASKED THAT WE ENSURE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS NOT REPEAT NOT PASSED TO THE GUATEMALANS.

6. OWEN WILL BE "REPLYING VERY SOON" TO VANCE'S LETTER OF 22 JUNE. FYI: SIR JOHN MORETON, UK DCM, HAS REQUESTED AN APPOINTMENT WITH AMBASSADOR TODMAN FOR FRIDAY, JULY 1.

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7. ARMS SEIZED BY BARBADOS: MILLINGTON SAID THE PLANE SEIZED BY THE BARBADIANS (REFTEL) WAS A BRITANNIA CLASS PLANE AND THAT ITS FLIGHT ORIGINATED IN GREAT BRITAIN. THE PLANE TRANSITED LISBON (PRESUMABLY THAT IS WHERE THE AMMUNITION WAS PUT ON BOARD), TRANSITTED THE AZORES, AND THEN PROCEEDED TO BARBADOS. MILLINGTON EXPRESSED SOME PUZZLEMENT AT THE DECISION TO ROUTE THE FLIGHT VIA BARBADOS INSTEAD OF TO SOME OTHER COUNTRY SUCH AS THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

8. PUMA HELICOPTER INTRUSION: WHEN DEPTOFFS MENTIONED MOLINA'S CONCERN ABOUT A PUMA'S INTRUSION, MILLINGTON REPLIED THE HELICOPTER HAD NEVER BEEN WITHIN GUATEMALA AND THAT IT HAD NEVER BEEN CLOSER THAN 500 METERS TO THE BOUNDARY LINE. MILLINGTON COMMENTED THAT THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY WERE "FEEDING MOLINA BAD INFORMATION" ON THIS CASE. THE BOUNDARY WHERE THE ALLEGED INTRUSION TOOK PLACE WAS WELL MARKED AND THE BRITISH WERE CERTAIN THE AIRCRAFT HAD NEVER BEEN WITHIN GUATEMALA.

9. NEGOTIATIONS: PREMIER PRICE WILL BE ATTENDING THE NEGOTIATING SESSION IN WASHINGTON, AND WILL BE ACCOMPANIED

BY ASSAD SHOMAN. MILLINGTON RAISED INFORMALLY THE
POSSIBILITY OF PRICE SEEING UNDER SECRETARY HABIB TO
PRESENT BELIZE'S CASE, BUT EMPHASIZED THAT THE BRITISH
WANTED ROWLANDS' MEETING TO BE SEPARATE FROM, AND EARLIER,
THAN ANY MEETING WITH PRICE. VAMCE

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